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Report on July Meeting

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Reactions, Queries, and Comments On Heathcote As A Community



WORK AND TALK
at School of Living
annual workshop (Heathcote
Center, Aug. 12-20).



Many discussions, questions and remarks are being made, at meetings and by correspondence, on Heathcote as a future small community. Below we print items from three people.

Likes "Feeling One's Way"

A newcomer writes:

During the few hours we were at the Heathcote sessions in August I was thoroughly impressed with the degree of Life arising out of so many there. We found the "feeling one's way along" approach of the workshop exciting and stimulating. Discussion is important, and anyone who imagines harmony to come from anything but confronting differences and conflict may find discussions taxing. It is my opinion that it is not lack of authority we are after, but the real authority of each individual. It is impossible ever to be free unless we have the inner freedom to allow things to happen. When we are terribly bothered by differences, chances are we need to go off and discover in ourselves our current bit of fakery or self-deception.

The need to give expression to whatever gifts we have is becoming unspeakably strong. We know that without expression the most vital sources dry up. From experience we know that our particular way of "unteaching"—by drawing out rather than by pouring in—can create a threat to other teachers whose feeling of accomplishment depends on how much they pour in. It is a threat, too, to parents who lack faith in the innate store of knowledge and wisdom within their children. So where to go we do not know.

A handful of Green Revolutionists and one copy of *A Way Out* is all the background we have on the School of Living. Probably further reading will simply fortify what I already feel... we are of a like mind, with some (thank goodness) differences. We plan to spend the next year disentangling ourselves, so that if direction comes we can take it—towards Canada, or maybe right up the road to Heathcote—who knows?—Ina Hicks, Ashton, Md.

Five Questions

Jean and Dave Frey (and children 7, 6, and 3), of Wilmette, Ill., say:

We are searching, and interested in the possibility of living at Heathcote, and wonder about these matters:

Q. How could we support our family if we were part of Heathcote?

A. There are various possibilities. There is always the basic production from garden, orchard and homestead. Concerned and qualified persons might produce cash income through book sales, printing or teaching in the School of Living. Four adults who live

at Heathcote now commute to jobs in Baltimore (35 mi.) or York, Pa. (25 mi.). One young person is considering establishing there a summer camp as his means of livelihood. Possible small industry developments include rug-making in the Mapka enterprise, assembling new typewriter keyboards, etc.

Q. Are any particular skills needed to join?

A. Gardening, teaching, crafts, art, music, drama would be useful, as well as anything to improve living, nutrition, child development, etc.

Q. What are the educational possibilities for children?

A. At present children attend Freeland, Md., public schools, two miles distant by bus. It is hoped that Heathcote residents, in time, will develop their own experimental school for children of members, with qualified "unteachers" among the adults.

Q. How does one become a member?

A. Write to Heathcote Center (Rt. 1, Box 129, Freeland, Md.) for an application form as a beginning for discussion and planning for membership.

Q. What are living accommodations at present?

A. A house trailer is available; the Spring House is being winterized; there's space for other trailers or tents; and a chicken house and carriage house can be insulated and used for temporary residence. One arrangement for getting acquainted there is a pre-membership residence period.

Decisions and Policy-Making

From Ferdi Knoess, former apprentice at Lane's End Homestead and now a homesteader at Pennington, Minn., comes four welcome and pertinent questions:

Q. If Heathcote belongs to the general membership of School of Living, should those who happen to have \$1,000, and have invested it in the land there, decide the shape and direction of the "community"?

A. Someone (or several someones) must take the initiative and responsibility at the beginning. Does anyone know any persons ready and willing to do this over and above those who have put their \$1,000 into the project to make the land available? The six people currently investors in that land didn't just "happen" onto \$1,000. They worked for and earned it. They are willing to use it for the Heathcote project (in effect, help "give" the land to future generations). Because they can help further this important goal, which they cherish, they are willing to take this first step. They are not dogmatic or dictatorial: they are postponing several decisions in order that later members can share in them. They

welcome suggestions and comments from interested persons from a distance.

Q. Doesn't community mean sharing, having things in common? I can't recall any discussion in our journals on what shape the community will take.

A. The concept of "community" differs for different people. The degree or amount of sharing varies, depending on members' philosophical outlooks and psychological needs. Human beings have both independent and dependent characteristics, individual and gregarious needs. Individuals need and want both privacy and association. Those who place the most value on gregarious association and interaction (and possibly dependence) will want a high degree of common sharing (of land, income, housing, tools, meals, etc.). Others who prefer more individual expression will choose a pattern where land is held in common but produced goods—houses, equipment, tools, meals, income, etc.—are held by families or individuals. Cooperation will be undertaken with others as need or preference dictates.

Some people hold that there is special virtue in complete sharing. Several communities have started on this plan, and discovered that persons were not sufficiently patient, kind or understanding to "get along" with people in this close association. A community in New England that resulted from the June, 1966, Community Conference at Heathcote adopted this plan. But gradually one after another found it too demanding and frustrating. In six months the community had disbanded.

Other people believe "individual expression" is the "greatest good" and common sharing of produced property is a burdensome and unnecessary "complexity." They are content to hold land in common and then co-operate or combine with others as their particular needs or level of growth requires.

At Heathcote, the initial planners (at this point) favor the latter type of community sharing. They feel this provides the best balance of both privacy and interaction.

Q. School of Living members have been sending money to help build Heathcote; shouldn't their wishes be considered?

A. Much appreciation is felt for this very needed help (acknowledged from time to time in *Green Revolution*). To date some \$2,500 in members' small gifts have gone into the buildings at the center (not into land or "community"). This sum, plus uncounted hours of free work from 30 or 40 (mostly nearby) members, has provided plumbing, furnace, windows, paint, two roofs, etc. Larger amounts made available include the \$4,700 paid by six investors for the acres of land and \$4,500 loaned (at very low interest or no interest) by two people. These loans, plus \$2,000 still owed on the purchase price, plus one year's taxes and insurance, are our current liabilities. Can we make a big effort now to clear up these debts?

Q. Isn't it probably true that only those physically present at Heathcote are making most of the crucial decisions? We are a libertarian group, which means everyone having a part in the decisions (this takes greater time and effort, of course).

A. Decision-making in a group project is indeed a difficult matter when those involved are in close face to face association, and much more complicated when persons are widely separated. (Decision by proxy, by representation and by mail discussion are only partially satisfactory.) The pages of *Green Revolution* are certainly open for full discussion of any and all pertinent decisions and policy matters.

One principle that seems basic is: "Those who make decisions should get or bear the consequences of their decisions." Its reverse is also true: those who shoulder the responsibility and work or put in the funds (which is their work) for developing the center are thereby entitled to make decisions and help form

policy.

So far as Heathcote "community" is concerned, can anyone take responsibility in any real sense if he is not present and available to work and share in an on-going process of community building? Each reader may contribute advice, suggestion, or counsel; a very important idea may come from anyone. And for the sake of the demonstration that a Heathcote community can be to a "better pattern of education and living," many members will want to share also by gift, and work, trusting the officers and nearby members for immediate decisions and responsibilities.

How do other members see this? How do those of you who have contributed work or money toward Heathcote suggest that you share in the decision-making and in taking responsibility for the results?—MJL

Report On July Youth Meeting

By Edith Gosnell, Coordinator

We had 20 attendants, 15 to 26 years old, at the Youth Seminar in July. It was very relaxed, and the young people had some good discussions. Some worked in the gardens, most went swimming, small group exchanges were important. Not all were satisfied, as some of them needed a more structured experience. Some said they preferred just youth and would rather not have those present who are a good deal older.

Overall, for the first youth session, I thought it was pretty good. Several came a day or two early, and several stayed through the week following—very friendly, active, resourceful young people. They painted the south walls of the Center, and it looked 100% better. Marilyn Dorsey liked the place so well she stayed a month. We thoroughly enjoyed her and Jerry Emerick who stayed a week. Steve Syz spent a few days with us, so we had a full house but it was great. The garden really thrived with all the help.

Letters, cont'd

Ind. They admit that merely taking clothes away from teenagers does not automatically end juvenile delinquency. But an 18-year-old girl, a nudist since infancy, says, "It works, I guess because nudism is a family affair. We kids are too busy spending time at camp, and with our folks, to get into trouble."—Rudi Brumenshenkel, Lexington, Ohio

CALENDAR OF EVENTS Heathcote School of Living

Rt. 1, Box 129
Freeland, Md.
Phone (513) 357-5723

Oct. 22—Session on Community at Heathcote, following "Mobilization" in Washington, D. C.

Nov. 18 (about)—School of Living Board of Trustees meeting (H. Roseman, secretary, 1452 E. 85th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.).

Jan. 1, 1968—Annual Anniversary Planning Session.

In Making, cont'd

method, I have made the finest yogurt and relieved myself of anxiety over temperature and timing.

Use a large canning kettle or a diaper pail with water initially at 120° F. Have the milk and culture at the same temperature. Make sure the water bath comes to the necks of the jars. Cover the kettle, and wrap well with bath towels, blanket, or other insulation. Leave all day or overnight, and you will find you have beautiful yogurt of a fine consistency. Best of all, I find that I can use my culture for an indefinite period, and it does not seem to "run out." If you happen to forget to remove the yogurt from the bath for a longer period, it still stays good. I have left it in the bath up to 18 hours with no harm.

Lately I have been stirring a good teaspoon of lactose (milk sugar) into each quart. This seems to result in even better consistency. Lactose is the food of the yogurt bacteria, and a little extra ration seems to help the process. I use skim milk, a heaping tablespoon of powdered milk (not instant), and the lactose to each quart, and my yogurt at the present time is the best I have ever made.

Incidentally, lactose also feeds our beneficial intestinal flora, and a teaspoonful in a cup of herb tea once a day (chamomile is good) is a practice in the German health spa where we stayed the summer of 1966.

Goat's Milk, cont'd

trouble, which doctor's couldn't cure, have been sent here for goat milk, and within a few weeks have been completely cured of this trouble.

Goats are not subject to so many diseases as cows. And one can feed at least four goats on the same amount of feed needed to keep a cow. Goats will eat almost anything in the feed line, if it is clean. They are the most affectionate animal I know of. Some times when separated from their owners they refuse to eat, and die. —Effie Neie, Box 1025, Alpine, Tex. 79830

Peculiar TV

A clever, life-like TV cartoon shows a man in bed. Nurse calls specialist, who prescribes a super-pill. Patient gets worse. Second specialist brings super-duper-pill. No improvement. Third specialist tries injection. Still no effect.

Then nurse offers patient—guess what? Bulgarian fresh fruit and vegetables! Patient has a real natural food banquet and recovers fast, with a brief lecture on getting your vitamins and minerals in food rather than pills.

After that, a movie showing farms and orchards of Bulgaria, beautiful girls galore in packing plants, trains and trucks rushing the stuff to your corner store. . . "So next time you shop ask for Bulgarian fruit and vegetables."

A typical example on Soviet TV, by a Bulgarian agency, reports the January, 1967, *Northern Neighbors* (Box 1000, Gravenhurst, Ontario, Canada).

A Lady Named Jess, cont'd

as well as a disc harrow. For twenty-five cents at an auction we became the surprised owners of a two seat "democrat." It was, when we bought it, in perfect condition with even the upholstery in good order. We did not have Jessie at this time so we had a friend of ours tow the wagon home behind his car. Going too fast around a corner, we cracked one of the shafts and nearly ended in a ditch beside the road. The democrat had an interesting mechanical brake: by pushing a pedal much like that in a car two rubber pads were forced against the rear wheels.

Anxious to try Jessie, we prematurely hitched her into the democrat without knowing what "hold backs" on the shafts are meant to do. "Hold backs" are small wooden blocks which prevent the wagon from shifting forward onto the horses' heels when going down hill. We found this out soon enough because on the first hill Jessie could not keep the front of the wagon from slipping forward and nipping at her heels. Naturally Jessie was intent on keeping ahead of the wagon which seemed to be chasing her. It was a wild ride. Luckily the hill was not very steep and Jessie quieted down in the long flat stretch beyond. We quickly learned that most of our mistakes with horses were made by the owner.

(to be continued)